

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ADDIS 05179 301600Z

67

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 INR-05 PRS-01 EUR-08 CU-02 EB-03 /046 W

----- 109529

R 301433Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4308

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR (POUCH)

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 5179

LIMDIS/NOFORN

STATE PASS CIA/DIA

PARIS FOR MELONE

LONDON FOR HAVERKAMP

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECON, PINS, PINT, ET

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF FIELD TRIP INTO WOLLO AND TIGRE

REF: ADDIS ABABA 4511

INTRODUCTION: THREE EMBASSY OFFICERS (ECON, POL, AID)  
MADE EIGHT-DAY FIELD TRIP INTO WOLLO AND TIGRE PROVINCES,  
INCLUDING STOPS IN DESSIE, MAKELLE, ADIGRAT AND AXUM.  
FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THEIR FINDINGS. FULL REPORT  
BY POUCH.

1. OFFICER RECEIVED REPORTS FROM THREE SOURCES

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 ADDIS 05179 301600Z

(ONE OF WHOM, AFTER SEVERAL HOURS CONVERSATION, ADMITTED

TO BEING ELF RECRUITER) THAT EFFORTS UNDERWAY TO ORGANIZE A TIGRE LIBERATION FRONT. ONE SUCH GROUP IS MARXIST ORIENTED WITH PRIMARILY URBAN/STUDENT FOLLOWING AND IS STRONG IN ADOWA-AXUM AREA. OTHER INSURGENT GROUP IS BEING ORGANIZED BY FOLLOWSERS OF RAS MENGESHA AND IS DIRECTED PRIMARILY AT RURAL POPULACE IN TIGRE, BEGEMDIR AND PARTS OF WOLLO PROVINCES. OTHER SOURCES CONTACTED WERE GENERALLY IN AGREEMENT THAT POPULACE OF TIGRE LIKELY WOULD SUPPORT RAS MENGESHA AGAINST CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO ABOVE THREE SOURCES, TWO OF WHOM RELATED TO STUDENTS EXECUTED IN ADDIS (SEE ADDIS 3233), ALL THREE STUDENTS WERE TLF ORGANIZERS. SEVERAL OTHER SOURCES AGREED THAT RUMORS CONCERNING INCIPIENT TLF ABOUT IN TIGRE AND, THEREFORE, THERE MAY BE SOME SUBSTANCE TO THEM. HOWEVER, NO ACTION AS YET TAKEN BY THESE GROUPS.

2. TWO ERITREAN SOURCES, ONE RECENTLY RETURNED FROM ERITREA AND OTHER IN CONTACT WITH ERITREAN REFUGEES IN TIGRE, BOTH AGREED THAT RECRUITS WHICH JOINED ELF AFTER JANUARY FIGHTING IN ASMARA HAVE NOW COMPLETED THREE MONTH TRAINING PERIOD AND ARE BEING POSITIONED FOR FUTURE BATTLE WHICH MAY TAKE PLACE IN APPROXIMATELY ONE MONTH. TWO SOURCES PLACED NUMBER OF NEWLY TRAINED RECRUITS AT 12,000 AND 17,000 RESPECTIVELY AND TOTAL ELF/PLF STRENGTH AT 30,000. (COMMENT: THESE FIGURES SOUND HIGH.) ACCORDING TO ELF RECRUITER, ELF DOES MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH OROMO LIBERATION FRONT AND OGADEN LIBERATION FRONT BUT NEITHER IS WELL ORGANIZED YET SO EFFECTIVE "COOPERATION" IS NOT YET POSSIBLE.

3. ONE OF ABOVE SOURCES, JUST RETURNED FROM ERITREA, STATES 3,500 ARMY TROOPS NOW STATIONED IN ADI UGRI. HE ADDS THAT ON OR ABOUT MARCH 19, SIX SMALL VILLAGES AROUND ADI UGRI WERE DESTROYED BY GOVERNMENT PLANES AND TROOPS WITH "SO MANY PEOPLE KILLED." SOURCE, WHO WORKED FOR SEVERAL MONTHS IN RURAL ERITREA UNTIL APRIL THIS YEAR, REPORTED THAT WHEN INSURGENTS TAKE REFUGE IN A VILLAGE, GOVERNMENT TROOPS BURN THE VILLAGE AND KILL ALL CIVILIANS AND ANIMALS IN THAT VILLAGE.

4. THREE STUDENTS IN TOWN OF ALAMATA NORTHERN WOLLO  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 ADDIS 05179 301600Z

REPORTED A RECENT CLASH BETWEEN GOVERNMENTALS AND DEJAZMATCH BERHANE MESKAL'S FOLLOWERS IN WHICH SOME OF THE LATTER'S FOLLOWERS WERE KILLED BUT THE DEJAZMATCH ESCAPED. SAME THREE STUDENTS REPORTED THAT TWO BALABATS, ONE NAMED DEJ. ABRAHA BELAI, HAVE GONE INTO THE BUSH SOUTH OF ALAMATA AND ARE IN OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT. OFFICERS RECEIVED SIMILAR REPORTS FROM OTHER SOURCES ABOUT DISSIDENT EX-LANDOWNERS. HOWEVER, THEIR FOLLOWINGS SMALL AND OF LITTE

CONCERN TO GOVERNMENT. SOURCES REPORTED THAT LAND-REFORM RELATED DISTURBANCES WERE UNLIKELY UNTIL GOVERNMENT TRIED TO REDISTRIBUTE LAND.

5. ALMOST NO RPT NO SOLDIERS WERE IN EVIDENCE DURING TRIP, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A FEW FIRST DIVISION TROOPERS SEEN IN DEBRE BERHAN, ONE OF THEIR BASE CAMPS. A LARGE NUMBER OF TERRITORIAL ARMY MEN WERE SEEN IN MAKELLE (WHERE THEY HAVE A CAMP); MOST OF WHOM WERE WEARING NEW UNIFORMS. A HITCHHIKING TERRITORIAL ARMY SOLDIER TOLD REPORTING OFFICERS THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF RECRUITS WERE RECENTLY INDUCTED INTO THE TERRITORIAL ARMY.

6. ZEMATCHOCH WERE IN EVIDENCE BUT SEEMED FEWER THAN THOSE IN OTHER AREAS VISITED BY SAME REPORTING OFFICERS. ZEMATCHOCH GENERALLY UNDEREMPLOYED IN WOLLO AND TIGRE AND RECEIVING LITTLE COOPERATION FROM PEOPLE. SOME ZEMATCH IN NORTHERN TIGRE REPORTED THAT THREATS HAD BEEN MADE TO THEIR LIVES.

7. PLOWING AND PLANTING APPEAR GENERALLY NORMAL THROUGHOUT AREA VISITED. REPORTING OFFICERS WITH CUMULATIVE EIGHT YEARS IN ETHIOPIA COULD DISCERN LITTLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS YEAR'S AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY AND PREVIOUS YEARS. ALTHOUGH BELG (SHORT) RAINS LATE IN MUCH OF THE AREA VISITED, THE ENTIRE AREA DID RECEIVE SIGNIFICANT RAINFALL DURING THE COURSE OF THE TRIP.

8. SOME SHORTAGES OF CONSUMER AND FOOD ITEMS SUCH AS MATCHES, SOFT DRINKS, COFFEE, FRUIT AND VEGETABLES WERE REPORTED. HOWEVER, SOME TRADE ACTIVITY BETWEEN ASMARA AND THE SOUTH HAS RESUMED WITH LARGE TRUCK CONVOYS BEING ESCORTED BY MILITARY IN AND OUT OF ERITREA.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 ADDIS 05179 301600Z

9. COMMENT: OFFICERS BELIEVE EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO ORGANIZE TIGRE PROVINCE AGAINST GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, THEY DISCERNED NO INDICATION OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE MARXIST AND RAS MENGESHA GROUPS AND RECEIVED NO INDICATIONS OF ANY OVERT ACTION YET TAKEN BY THEM.  
HUMMEL

SECRET

NNN



## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PROVINCE, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 30 APR 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975ADDIS05179  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750152-0155  
**From:** ADDIS ABABA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t1975041/aaaaaasz.tel  
**Line Count:** 161  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Reference:** 75 ADDIS ABABA 4511  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 21 MAY 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <21 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <22 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SUMMARY OF FIELD TRIP INTO WOLLO AND TIGRE  
**TAGS:** ECON, PINS, PINT, ET  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006